

LOADSTAR LETTER



#39

Not-So-New Ebonize Prolongs Ribbons

By Jeff Jones. I got a call last week from Attorney Theodore Pollock, who struck me as an animated entrepreneur. He invented the aerosol ribbon re-inker, *Ebonize*, and founded *Upwego Computer Supply*. No, it's not WD-40. It's actually aerosol ink. Its Windy City inventor, after telling me that I had lost my Midwestern accent, told me that he was disappointed in the results of WD-40 and sought to improve upon the concept. Instead of merely wetting and diluting the ink with oil as WD-40 does, *Ebonize* really is ink that's sprayed inside the ribbon cartridge and allowed to soak in for 48 hours before re-use. I've already tried *Ebonize* on my Panasonic printer, and it is indeed *black*. Don't try this in your white

tux, and don't try it with the cartridge in your lap. The ink does splatter under pressure.

I also tried re-inking the sponge ink reservoir, which is actually a built in re-inker in the Panasonic cartridge, activated only when a small clip is pressed. I won't know if that worked until the ribbon begins to fade again. I read testimony of users who have re-inked ribbons a dozen or so times until the ribbon literally fell apart. Theodore says that he hopes his product can maximize the use of orphaned Commodore printers. Call for current price (\$8-14 per can with second can for \$5.00). Each can can re-ink 20 ribbons. *Upwego Computer Supply, Inc.*
120 West Madison Street
Chicago IL 60602
312-372-6692
fax 312-263-7645

SSI Update

by Robert Bernardo. After hearing the bad news about SSI, I phoned them on Friday, Oct. 3, to place an order before all their Commodore materials were to be discarded on Jan. 1. I asked if it was true about no support for Commodore. The lady from SSI responded that they had rethought their position and decided to *continue* to

carry Commodore and Amiga materials. However, once their stock is depleted, they will not restock. Their latest catalog—which I received a few days ago, will be their last Commodore/Amiga catalog. They will no longer actively promote Commodore/Amiga, being that they want to concentrate their efforts on PC.

When I asked about their walk-in service, the lady told me that there would still be shelves of Commodore/Amiga materials until the stock was gone. I thanked her for SSI's support in the past, expressed my relief that the software would still be there, wished them luck in their future endeavors, and obtained permission to broadcast this on the Net. Robert Bernardo
r.bernardo@genie.com
FCUG home page -
<http://www.msen.com/~brain/guest/fcug/>



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Why Do I Find myself Pining For



By Jeff Jones. Remember the giant sucking sound that came before NAFTA? It was Quantum Computer Services sucking \$99 from God knows how many unsuspecting C-64 users for a "lifetime membership" which was destined to last only a year or

so. When Qlink closed its doors to open AOL, financed partially by those funny Commodore lifetime memberships, I vowed I'd never log on. Well imagine my surprise when I was hanging ten across the Internet and caught this tube at <http://www2.ari.net/home/jpurkey/qscreens.html>. Suddenly I was overcome with warm feelings. It was



QUANTUM?



suddenly the evil Qlink again, right before my eyes — and I missed it like an old girlfriend. Never before has a CG screen capture heralded such a rush of endorphins.

Now that Commodore is the black sheep of the computer

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Getting More Than 144/296 files Into a 1541/71/1581 Directory

By Jeff Jones. Frankly I had never seen a 1541 disk directory with more than 144 files in it before. I had heard of them, but was never much interested in them. Here we run out of disk blocks long before we run out of file allocation space. I wish we had thought of this when mastering our GEOS clipart collection. That was an instance where we had the file space on the 3.5-inch version, but had more than 296 files. So we ended up *Wrap*torizing the files to get them all on the disk in fewer files. It seems that every time I've heard of this scheme, it was in conjunction with storing many small graphic files.

My philosophy is now, and always will be, get the hardware or operating system to do the job for you whenever possible. I was able to pull this off when I filled a 1541 disk drive with 300 files last week.

The 1541 disk drive stores its files in track 18 and the 1581 stores them in track 40 in 32-byte chunks. They store files in these tracks because they are physically in the middle of the disk, and the drive head will never have to jump more than halfway across the disk to fetch any one file. I had to find a second directory track. I chose track one — all the way on the end of the disk.

I only tried this on a 1571 drive and FD-4000 1541 emulation partition, but the technique should work with any type drive — except CMD native directories where file allocation is unlimited.

First I formatted a new 1541 disk. I knew that there was no more room in track 18 for more filenames, so I would have to link it to another track.

I booted *DISK CRACKER*, a simple

sector editor supplied with every CMD storage device, and jumped to track 18 sector 1 and proceeded to jump to the final sector in the directory. To my surprise, the directory ended right there. I had to actually create links in this fresh directory. I didn't know what the final link would be.

Like I said: *let the device do the work for you*. I did a simple for loop:

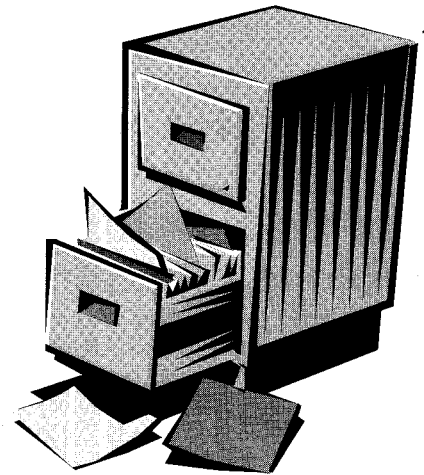
```
10 for i=1 to 144
20 open,8,2,"file"+str$(i)+".p,w"
30 print#2,"This is file"i
40 close 2
50 next
```

Oy vay, does it take a 1541 a long time to create 144 files — even empty ones! Since it was going slowly, I copied the disk to my FD-2000's emulation partition for quicker work. I had each file have specific data inside to test the integrity of files later on. Anyhow I now had a full directory with links all the way to the final sector in the directory.

I re-booted *DISK CRACKER* and jumped until I found the last link (a sector that jumps to track 0, sector 255). Since I knew nothing would be on track one yet because of the way the drive fills, I went ahead and linked track 18 to track 1, sector 0.

I went ahead and saved a file 145 and then checked it. It was there, but the directory looked weird. I linked all of track one and then validated in order to allocate track one in the BAM, again letting the drive do that work for me. I then went on to save more than 300 files on the 1541 partition.

When I copied the disk back to a real



1541, it didn't work no matter what I tried. When I tried validating, it went into endless loops. I thought I had failed until I thought (somehow) maybe the directory just doesn't want to link to a sector 0 on any track. I changed the first track of the second directory to track 1 sector 1 instead of sector 0 and I was able to validate and the directory looked fine when listed. The 1541 saved hundreds of unique files, each checking with valid information. For storage of zillions of tiny files, I still say *WRAPTOR* is better, but for presentation software like *LOADSTAR*, this method is worth using. ☐

Meeting 64/128 Users Through the Mail

This robust group was started about ten years ago. I asked Tom Adams to re-introduce this nationwide user group to *LOADSTAR* readers:

We now average about 260 members from many states and some foreign countries. We are a diverse group with many Commodore 64/128 interests and levels of experience represented. We correspond with each other, tell about ourselves and interests, both in and out of computing, ask questions and give advice.

We publish a 16-20 page newsletter every other month (Jan., Mar., May, etc.) called "The Commodore MailLink." The

newsletter contains information about new members, articles of general computer information, columns with tips, buy/sell/trade items and people looking for and giving advice and/or information.

There is a "biography" (bio) from each member which tells about his or her interests and computer equipment. A complete membership list with the addresses and bios is sent with the March and September newsletters. New members and bios are published in the newsletter between these times.

We DO NOT maintain a Public Domain disk library. We do publish a

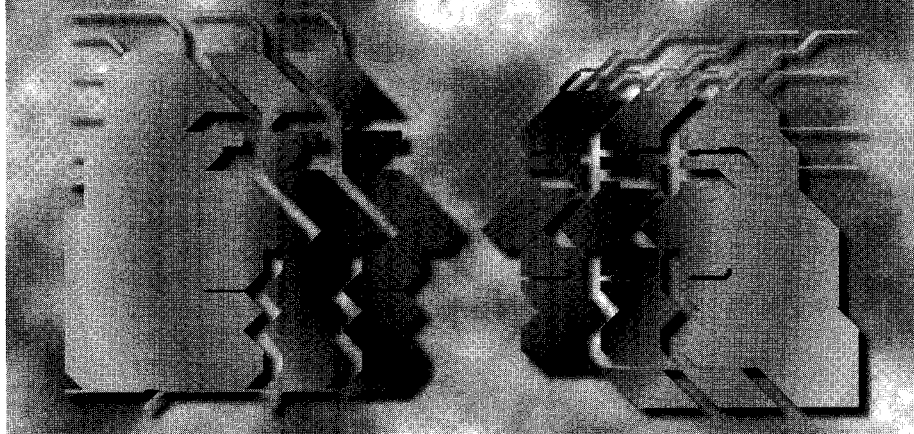
disk version of "The Commodore MailLink." The disk version is in addition to the hardcopy version.

In joining you agree to use the information publishes for personal communications with members. The bio information IS NOT for mass mailings or solicitation of other items.

Dues for 1996 are \$12.00 for US members. \$14.00 (US) for our Canadian neighbors. Overseas dues are \$22.00 (US). Memberships that begin after January are pro-rated accordingly, for an example those joining for the July issue

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Electronic Letters To The Editor



Loving Parents In Lock Step With Intel Commercials

Dear LOADSTAR,

My parents are demanding that I get rid of my Commodore equipment - they either want me to throw it away or sell it now. I would rather that someone who would use the Commodores would get it rather than the dump...

I have a C-128-D, a C128, a C64(don't know if it works), 2 1571 drives, tons of software (lotsa LOADSTAR) and 2 monitors.

I would like to know if there are any interested buyers at the LOADSTAR Tower, or any subscribers who want the equipment. I'll take the best offer on price. Keep up the good work!
P.S. I have a PC64 emulator for my IBM computer so I can still keep up with the Commodore world!!!

Please Email responses to:
ezack@hotmail.com
Eric Zack

Jeff: I can understand your predicament. You're obviously computer literate and connected on the Internet since I received your letter. Your parents are engaging in part computer snobbery and partially they're just looking out for you. They probably see no future in becoming a Commodore expert, and there is some truth to that. I would do a couple of things to get my parents to reconsider:

- First find out if they (or you) have absolute plans for you to become a computer programmer or a software consultant. If not then you have a good argument that indulging in a fun computer isn't wrecking your future.
- Promise to become more PC literate
- Allocate time to mastering the PC

- Show your parents how using a C-64 has made you more computer literate than you would be if you had only used a PC. Believe me it has.
- If all else fails, you might try threatening to dial 911 if your parents dared touch your computer! ☺

Email Exchange Over the State Of The LOADSTAR Letter between Mike Neus,

Neus@ti.com, and Jeff Jones, jeff@loadstar.com

Mike: I got my first "independent" Loadstar Letter last night. I'm very disappointed. It looks, feels and reads just like all the old Loadstar Letters do which I've never been all that pleased with -- full of editorial content and no "meat." I was expecting alot more. The Underground will be missed! Jeff Jones promises improvements, and I've got something like three issues left to come. We'll have to see!

Jeff: I don't know what to say. I know that most people who subscribe to it love it. I've continually heard extreme complaints and extreme praise. The newsletter was started at first ONLY to reassure our readers that we weren't dying. People were jumping ship because of rumors of LOADSTAR's demise in the early 90s. Because the newsletter was free, I didn't feel I had an obligation to make it the best in the world because people told me they loved it, they collected it, and if people were missing their LOADSTAR LETTER, they demanded a replacement. Funny, it wasn't until I tried improving it that the complaints rolled in steadily. Of course adding a price tag didn't help. I've asked the complainers what they want. What I got back was:

- More Geos.
- How to use the programs we've already been using for years.
- News about Commodore

Well, I began the first independent LS letter with two of the above. Unfortunately, there isn't much news in the Commodore world. I stopped scouring the web and mags for real news because things except for net stuff, CMD and LOADSTAR are starting to get recycled. There's little left but programming instruction, the Super CPU and how-to for people who just don't get the basics. LOADSTAR has a lot of new commodore users -- people who just inherited a C-64, and we get a lot of simple questions like "how do I get online" and "What is a hard drive?"

If someone -- anyone -- would please explain to me what "meat" is, I'll go to the butcher and get some.

Mike: But now that it's split away, I expect it to be more of a magazine that stands on its own. I viewed the "old" LOADSTAR LETTER largely as a letter from the editor with a few interesting anecdotes that don't quite fit with the Loadstar philosophy and a place for businesses to advertise. The first independent issue was a good step in the right direction where you have added what appears to be a regular column in future LOADSTAR LETTERs (the BASIC to ML column which was good).

Jeff: These are of course easy to write, and there's no end to them.

Mike: "How to use programs we've already been using for years" would be a waste of space. If they've been using them for years, what more do they need to know?

Jeff: Well that's the kind of feedback I got. That's what a GEOS column is: "How do I use a program that I've been using for years?" Believe it or not these type of columns exist even in teeming PC mags, with tips for programs that are all but self explanatory as far as I'm concerned. Here's the meat issue again. Do we explain how to do floating point and graphics in ML or do we give general pointers that guys like you consider very basic?

Mike: "News about Commodore"? I agree a general news section would be nice, but there simply is not a Commodore left to have news about.

Jeff: What I've found is that Commodore users tend to want to praise their Commodores, which gets old quick for some. We've also found that the simpler we go, the more positive feedback we get. If we write a "non-meaty" article like: how to turn

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on your C-64, 20 people will write, "Bravo." If we write "How to write html documents on your C-64," we'll get "Stop writing those damn PC articles!"

Mike: Go ahead and keep what's there already if people like it. First, make it bigger. Eight pages just simply cannot hold much information unless you strip it down to the bare minimum.

Jeff: Done.

Mike: To this, add: Letters to the editor.

Jeff: Done — in spades. I've gotten a lot of nudges to expand the letters page.

Mike: News — not just on Commodore, but news in general such as product releases (software and hardware), the latest at LOADSTAR, C64 or even Amiga related news from VISCorp, who owns Commodore this week, what's happening at CMD, interesting Commodore related stuff extracted from Usenet, maybe even what's been going on at a few user groups, even things not relevant to Commodore if it's relevant to the computer industry, etc.

Jeff: I have thought about digesting Usenet more, keeping in mind that some people on Usenet will say, "I already read this stuff online for free!" The Amiga stuff might generate a few mail bombs. I'll report it if it lands in my lap, but I've stopped hunting the Internet for Commodore news overseas. It's been too still for too long, and companies like Newsbytes aren't reporting Commodore news, even when you prompt them to. People have to send press releases to me otherwise I won't know. *[To anyone reading: A press release is news, and is in truth a FREE AD when it's printed. Send pictures and screen shots.]*

Mike: A Feature Story (I liked the Tim McVeigh article though I'm not sure if this is really the kind of press we want to spread about C-64s). Product Reviews (hardware and software) -- I have been seeing reviews as of late, specifically the SuperCPU has been getting a lot of attention (though no official review that I can recall). I remember a printer review lately and the laptop was an interesting review, but might I suggest until the LOADSTAR LETTER sheds itself of its non-Commodore image it seems to have mysteriously picked up with a few people (in light of the last issue) that

reviews of non-Commodore hardware be put on hold?

Jeff: Thanks for your input, and the news you've already Emailed to me. This is the kind of input I like. The drive-by hissing leaves me with nothing to work with. After reading your letter, I'm eager to implement some of your suggestions. Right now it's me, Scott, and the Internet. Keep in mind that the majority of our readers are not online, and what I show them of the 8-bit Internet is news to them -- as long as the jargon isn't too much.

Hooking A Zip Drive To A CMD HD

Dear Jeff:

I enjoyed your article on "More Computer Ripoffs." In my current position in Data Processing, I meet a lot of users getting cheated by these "deals."

Could you please go into detail on how a CMD users would implement a SCSI Zip Drive? Not that I would want to take any Commodore business from CMD or LOADSTAR, but the idea of using an IBM DASD would be very interesting.

Currently, more and more IBM users are going to the 1 and 2 gig drives. I am hoping that this will put the price of these 100mb units into the reach of people who can really use it.

I have looked around the Internet for info on this and would appreciate any information. Thanks again.

Sorry about the delay in responding to last month's article on the TRS-80 Model 100 laptop. I thought it was an excellent article on the machine.

In addition to using the communications program to move script files, there's another way. You probably didn't mention it due to space limitations, but here's how I move text files to my Commodore:

Hook up the computers with the RS 232 cable and null modem just as you normally would. Start the Commodore's communication program and open the buffer.

On the Tandy, go into TEXT, open the file you want to send and press F3. The Save To: prompt appears. Type COM:12345, with 1=modem speed, 2=word length, 3=parity, 4=stop bit and 5=line status. Close and save the contents of the buffer on the Commodore side. This was in a user's guide to a Tandy 102.

If you are looking for any equipment or manuals, I know the Air Force used a lot of these machines. My 100 came from the Air Force via a used computer shop just outside Scott Air Force Base. At the time, they had a couple of 100s and a few model 200. There was also a tan colored laptop that seemed to have the same menu option as the 100, but had a flip up (8x40) LCD monitor. The Air Force seemed to use these machines to communicate with a Digital DEC/VAX system since there are notes on how to interface with these mid frames all through the operator's manual.

Thanks again for the great articles and I hope LOADSTAR Letter is a big success.

Jerry J. Gossett
JJGosse@MKG.com

Jeff: Thanks for the kind words, and the positive comments on the M100 article, which has generated a surprising amount of Email. I know this will rub some the wrong way, but you can probably pick up an old laptop 286 or 386 for a low price, too, and connect it to your C-64. Since I can't read my own notes, I was looking for any cheap laptop for school.

Detailed information on adding Zip drives to CMD HDs were published in *Commodore World* #7. I can't include it here because the inches left in this column are literally all the space left in the entire newsletter this month. Just make sure of two things: Get the SCSI Zip Drive, and make sure it has a SyQuest mechanism. The Parallel unit is *not* what you want.

Basically you can follow the instructions in your HD manual, but there is important, updated, information you should follow in the *Commodore World* article. For instance, once you begin chaining drives, you can no longer delete partitions as before, and all Zip disks must be partitioned the same because the partition information for the Zip unit is contained in the drive, not the cartridge. Call CMD at 1-413-525-0023 for information on back issues of *Commodore World*. ☐

Commodore Connections



Photo by Frank Vanaman

Aha! I'm glad to see you came back for more :) Hopefully last month's column convinced you that the Internet can be just as useful and just as much fun for Commodore users as it is for other computer platform users. But, if you are still skeptical, there is only one way to find out for sure -- try it out for yourself. Many Internet service providers (ISPs) offer a trial period. You can easily cancel your account if, after your trial run, you are still not convinced.

This month I'll tell you how to connect to the Internet. Of course, the first item on the agenda is locating an Internet service provider, preferably one which provides a local telephone number to access your would-be account. The Internet is also accessible through many of today's commercial on-line services such as Genie. Finding a local ISP shouldn't be all that difficult. Check the Yellow Pages of your telephone book and call your local computer store. If you're fortunate enough to have a friend with an Internet account, ask him to visit

<http://thelist.iworld.com/>

Provide him with your area code so that he can generate a list of ISPs for your specific area. And, if all else fails, don't fret because as a very last resort you can write to me care of LOADSTAR's address, include

"ATTN: SHERRY FREEDLINE" in the address, a SASE, the area code in question, along with \$1.00 to cover printing costs and I will happily provide you with a list of ISPs for your area code.

Before you sign up with an ISP, you should ask them a few questions. The first and most important of all the questions is whether or not they offer a Unix Shell account (sometimes referred to simply as a "shell" account). This is very important because at the moment it is the only way for a Commodore computer to connect to the Internet. Some other good questions you may want to ask are:

- What are their rates?
- Do they offer a "flat fee"?
- Does the account provide the ability to send and receive Internet e-mail?
- If there is more than one member in your household, can you obtain multiple e-mail addresses?
- Do they provide you with a workspace area to store any files you may wish to download?
- If so, what is the size in bytes of this storage area?
- Do they offer more than just access to the World Wide Web (WWW)?
- Do they offer IRC (Internet Relay Chat), Gopher, Telnet, and FTP (File Transfer Protocol), and Newsgroup access?

- And, finally, can you create and post your very own Home Page on the World Wide Web?

The fun begins once you've chosen an ISP that meets all your requirements. The next step is to create a handle (or alias) for yourself. Choose carefully because this handle will be seen every time you send e-mail, post a message in a newsgroup, or visit a channel on the IRC. Next you'll be asked to create a password. Your password can usually contain both letters (upper- and lower-case) and numbers. It's good to use a mixture of both. Your password should also be of a considerable length and should also be changed frequently. Your password is your security against access to your account, your e-mail, and your files by unauthorized persons. Once you've completed this initial process, your ISP will provide you with any additional steps required to access your brand new account.

The next step is to sit down at your Commodore and gather the required tools. You'll need a terminal program equipped with VT-100 emulation (VT-52 & VT-102 can also be used) and a 2400 (or greater) baud modem. The most popular terminal program for accessing the Internet via a Commodore 64 appears to be Nick Rossi's Novaterm 9.6. For the C-128, it's a toss up between Dialogue 128 and Desterm. Load up your terminal software and configure it for no local echo and VT-100 emulation. You're now ready to log on to that brand-new account. Command your computer to dial your local access number by typing (in terminal mode) "atdtxxxxxx", replacing the x's with the telephone number. Once connected, follow the log on procedures provided by your ISP and you should finally be connected to the infamous super highway! Until then, remember... The Internet is for Commodore Users! ☺

AMIGA 500 System for sale LS Subscribers Only

Amiga 500 w/120MB hard drive, 5 meg RAM, 40 MHZ 68030 accelerator plus 286 board hardware emulator. 64 emulator plus cable. Numerous software titles. Midi Interface, MIDI/DTP/WP Software. Hundreds of DD disks. Asking \$300. Shipping included.

Contact Jeff Jones at Loadstar

Desktop geoPublishing Part 2: Creating the Master Page

by Scott Eggleston. This time we're going to jump head first into creating our first document. When writing this short series, I am going to assume you understand the basics of using GEOS. As a result, I will not cover every minute detail of geoPublish, but most of what you'll need to get up and running. For every in and out of this program, consult your manual. That said, let's begin!

As with all GEOS applications, you must first open it, choose "create" and give your document a name. This happens with complete self-explanation.

Next, the computer dumps you out to a screen with a toolbox on the left, a command bar on top, and blank page representing an actual 8½x 11" page on the right. There is another box on the lower left which details the file name, page number, and X and Y coordinates of your pointer.

This is actually Page Graphics mode, which is the last mode we'll use. To get to Master Pages, press Commodore M, or click on "Master Pages", found within the "mode" option on the command bar.

Another box will appear between the toolbox and the filename/XY box. It should say "Master Page".

The first thing we need to do is setup your basic document format. Click on "file" on the command bar, followed by "doc setup". A box will appear in the center of the screen with three options. The first is the starting page number. Since geoPublish has a 16-page limit, you may have more than one file for a particular document. I had two formats for the Underground. The smaller one had 28-32 pages and three geoPublish files. The larger one had 20 pages and two files.

When writing geoPublish, I imagine the programmers didn't think we'd have a drive larger than a 1541, hence the 16 page limit. While a revision would have been nice to accommodate larger drives, the ability to start your document with any page number is at least a decent workaround.

The next option allows you to choose between one or two master pages.

One master page is most common, but two is nice if you want something like your page numbers in opposite corners.

Finally, you can select whether you want your first page in the file to use the left or right master page. Obviously, this option is only valid if you choose to have

two master pages.

If you have chosen two master pages, you'll notice your "Master Page" box in the middle left now has some new options. You can choose to edit your left or right master page by clicking on "left" or "right" respectively. A copy function is also available to copy one master page to the other. This is handy, but it's easy to copy one page over the other accidentally. There is no "are you sure?" prompt, so be careful.

Okay, let's get to the meat of master page mode: creating a grid. A great feature of geoPublish allows you to create a grid which becomes a template for the remaining modes. This grid makes it easy to place text in Page Layout mode, and graphics in Page Graphics mode. Remember that this grid

will not appear in your printout, but is strictly there for layout purposes.

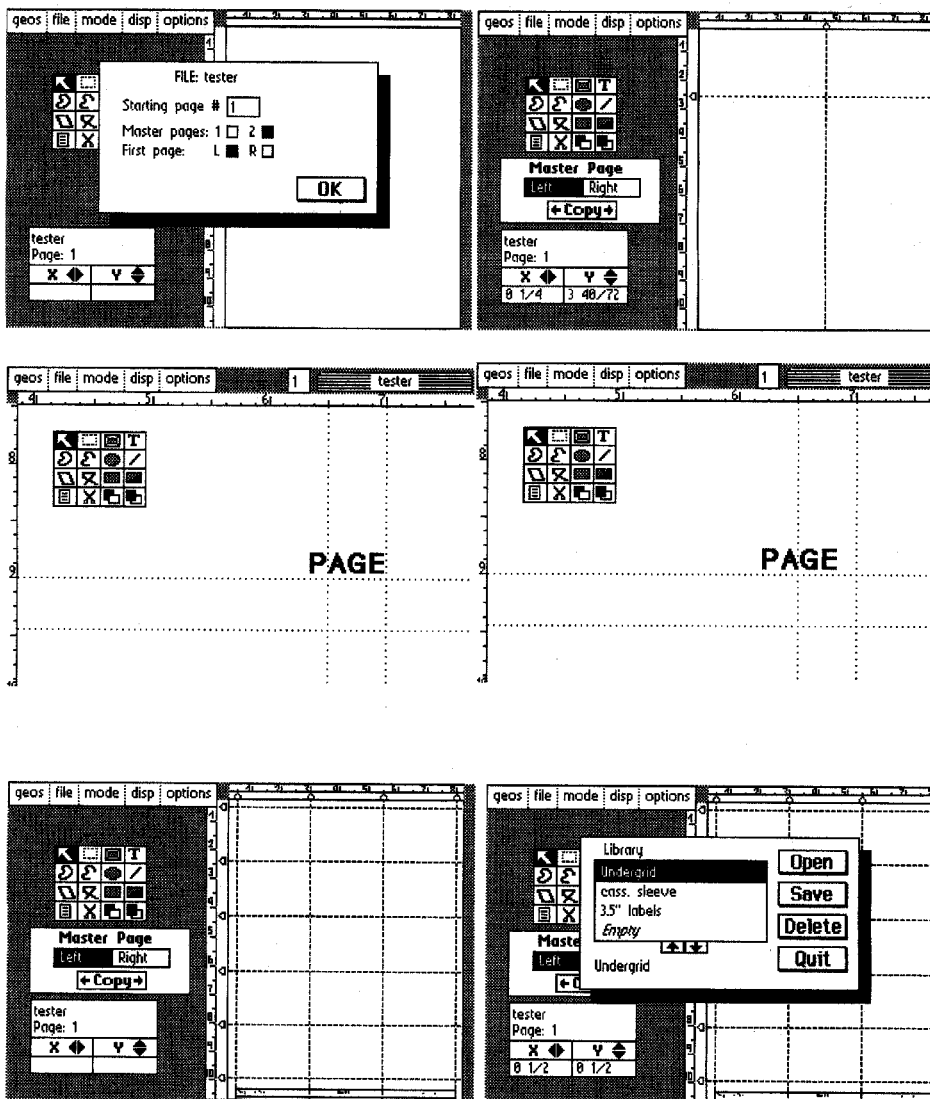
Construction of this grid is point-and-click simplicity. Just move your pointer into the document's horizontal or vertical margin, and click. A dotted line appears across the appropriate axis. If you want to move your guideline, click on the mark next to the line (again in the margin), and the mark will turn black allowing you to move it.

Click within the margin to place it, or out of the margin to delete it. Both margins have a limit of 8 gridlines each.

If you want to really get precise when placing the guidelines, use the cursor keys. This allows fine movement of the pointer. Keep your eye on the X/Y display to see how you're doing.

While producing the Underground,

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Desktop geoPublishing Part 2: Creating the Master Page

I preferred to use an equally dispersed grid, allowing me a flexible layout. Combinations of these "boxes" permitted the creation of various-sized spaces for headers, graphics, etc.

It's important to remember that anything you place on the page in MP mode will appear on every page in your document. If you're using two master pages, then it's every other page.

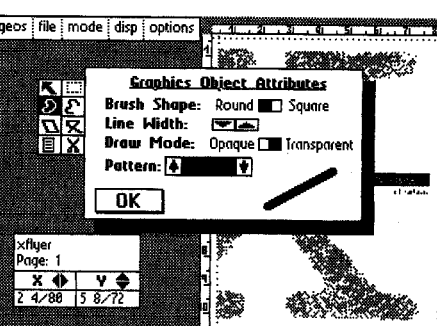
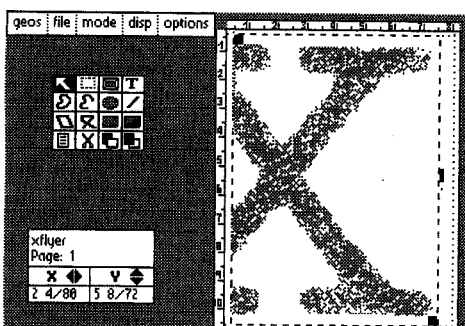
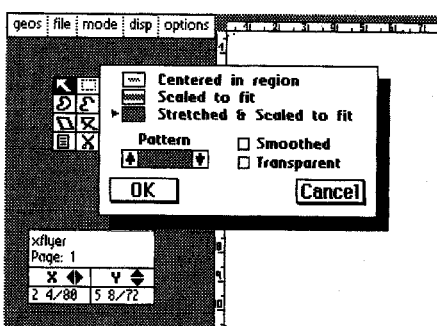
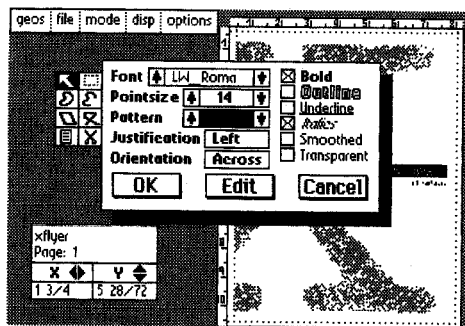
There are only a few elements you are probably going to want on your master page. The most common is the page number, which is handy for any document with more than one page. This is done by putting the word PAGE (notice all capital letters) anywhere on your page with the text tool (see sidebar).

There is a little quirk you should know about the PAGE command. When used in the right corner of a page remember the "P" in PAGE is where numbers 1-9 will appear. If your pages number in double digits, "P" will hold the tens and "A" will hold the ones. This is important to remember, as pages 9 and 10 will not match in the same document. The solution is to create separate files (with PAGE place appropriately) for pages 1-9 and 10-whatever. This rule does not apply for page numbers that are left justified.

Several other options may be viable for your master page(s). You may want the month or title of your publication to appear throughout it. These are placed the same as the above PAGE command, just use the text tool.

Perhaps you'd like a footer or header box or ellipse to surround your master page information. Using the appropriate tool in the toolbox should do the trick. You may even want a graphic or club logo to regularly appear. This is easily done with the bitmap tool, and can even be rescaled. Remember, these are just suggestions, so feel free to experiment and try new things.

For exacting placement of any graphic or text element, use the zoom mode found under the "disp(ay)" option, or press Commodore Z. A box will appear over the document which represents the "zoom window". When you click again, the area in the box will enlarge allowing more detailed work. You can then scroll around within the zoomed area, but it is very slow, even when using a RAM device. Commodore P (or "preview" in the "disp" menu) will return to preview mode.



When you have the master page(s) just the way you want them, geoPublish allows you to save your framework for future documents. Clicking on "file" and then "library" will bring up a storage area exclusively for your master page skeletons. Here you can load, save, delete, or rename your master pages.

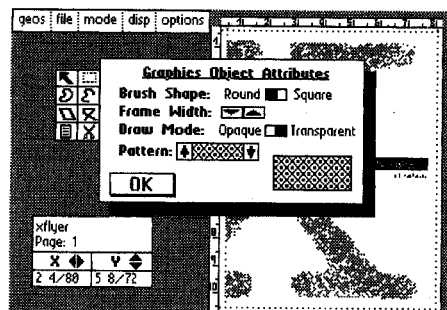
That's our lesson this month on geoPublish's master page mode. It's important to note that your manual is the best resource for using this program, and these articles should not be used in place of it. Used together, however, may make the learning of geoPublish an easier experience.

To use geoPublish effectively, you have to get to know that block of icons which reside in the mid-upper left of your screen. These tools will change when entering Page Layout mode, but it should be noted that both Master Page and Page Graphics mode use the same tools.

Starting at the top of the toolbox and moving left to right, we start with the pointer. This simply gets you out of any other tool selected, restoring your ability to select a graphics object to manipulate. More on that later.

Next is the Select Area tool, which will allow you to move several objects on the page simultaneously. This is accomplished by enveloping all the objects you want to move with a "boundary box" (the adjustable dotted

line created by clicking once on the screen, then dragging until it encloses the objects you want to move)--I just call it a "fence". Note that the Select Area fence must be larger than all the object fences, or it won't work



properly. The object fences can only be seen by clicking on them, and may have to be resized for this function to work.

With any of these functions that creates this enclosure, you'll notice a small black box in the upper left and lower right corner of the fence. The upper left one will let you move the fence, while the lower right simply resizes it.

Now all your selected objects can be moved to any location on the screen. The Bitmap Placement Tool is one you will use over and over to spice up your document. Click on this and you'll get some crosshairs

(Continued on page 8)

Geopublishing Continued

(Continued from page 7)

replacing your pointer. Move anywhere on your document and click again. Whatever Photo Scrap is on your disk will be placed in the spot you chose.

To move the bitmap somewhere else on the page, click on the Pointer to exit out of Bitmap Placement, and click on the image. A fence will appear around it, allowing you to move it somewhere else. For advanced bitmap functions, see the Attribute tool below.

The Text Tool will let you place text anywhere on the screen in any font, style or direction. This is not for importing text files, which is done in Page Layout mode, and uses a completely different toolbox.

After clicking, crosshairs appear again, so you can tell geoPublish where you want your custom text. Once selected, a box appears in the middle of the screen, and you can type in your title, label, caption, or whatever. From here you are given options to go ahead and place the text on the screen using the current settings ("OK"), change the text's attributes ("ATTR"), or forget the whole thing ("CANCEL").

Selecting "ATTR" brings up another box with many options. Here you can change the font, point size, justification, and orientation of your text. The fonts shown are the ones on your disk, with point sizes ranging from 4 to 192. Justification is your standard left, right, and center; but orientation consists of up, down, and across, allowing more flexibility than what geoWrite offers. The "pattern" option lets your text reflect one of the patterns most associated with geoPaint for a custom look.

All the styles for the font are allowed as well (bold, outline, underline, italics, or a combination of the four), as well as "smoothed", which cleans up enlarged fonts, and "transparent" which lets whatever is under the text bleed through. To see anything underneath, however, the pattern of the text cannot be solid black.

The final options consist of executing your changes ("OK"), re-editing your text ("EDIT"), or quitting ("CANCEL").

The next seven tools are somewhat similar in nature. They allow you to create custom graphic elements, similar to geoPaint. These are not loaded from disk, but instead made on the spot.

The first two are Closed Spline and Spline, two of my least-used geoPublish tools. These allow creation of smooth

lines set by clicking on points (double-clicking ends it), after which the computer "connects the dots" creating a smooth line. One tool creates a continuous loop, the other doesn't. While kinda nifty, I have really never used either of these. Maybe you will.

Next is Circle/Ellipse, which makes circles of all sizes and shapes, with varying thicknesses, and enclosed patterns. Exactly like the tool in geoPaint, this one is better in that you can make circles the size of the entire page, or really small using the zoom option. For tweaking, use the attribute tool described below.

The Line tool is also handy, as you will need lines on your page sooner or later. This is also like the geoPaint version, only with the same advantages as the Circle tool.

Two cousins of the Spline brothers follow, only they are a little more useful. These are the Polygon and Connected Line tools, and follow the same "connect the dots" method of implementation. I've found these tools great for creating "bang" effects around words or pictures.

The Square/Rectangle Tool operates exactly like Circle, except that it makes neat and tidy boxes. Line thickness can be varied, and patterns within it can be toggled. It too, can make boxes as large or small as you want.

One of the most important tools in this collection is the Attribute tool. There are two ways to activate it. One is to click on a graphic tool, and then on Attribute, so you can adjust the output before it happens. The other is to click on an existing graphic element, then on Attribute, which will bring up the appropriate editing widow. When done, the graphic will be redrawn with your changes.

Using Attribute with any of the line tools (the Splines, Line, Polygon, and Connected Line) allows the changing of the line thickness as well as the pattern you want the line to reflect. Using it with shape tools (Circle, Square) lets you adjust line thickness and the pattern within the shape. Both let you change the brush shape (round or square), and allow a transparent mode.

When used with a bitmap, Attribute is really neat. Here you can select a pattern the bitmap will reflect, and re-scale the image larger or smaller than the original, much like geoPaint. Smoothing is also allowed for those enlarged images that may appear too blocky.

Finally, when used with the Text option, the attribute box mentioned above (same as "ATTR") will become available.

The final row of the tools box has to do with miscellaneous effects for graphics that already exist. The first, Update, will redraw the entire screen. Screen updates are not automatic in geoPublish (most likely a speed consideration), and this tool lets you clean everything up.

The pair of scissors is the Cut tool which simply deletes a selected graphic object. Note that this tool does not place the graphic back into a Photo Scrap, but just erases it. To get it back, you must reload or recreate it.

The final two tools are used for graphic layering purposes. Foreground and Background will take a selected object and deliver it to the plane its namesake describes. If you have two graphics on top of one another, Foreground will bring the bottom to the top, and Background will put the top on the bottom. This is a great help in creating dropshadows for text and boxes, as well as other effects.

That, in a nutshell, is what geoPublish gives you for a creative arsenal. Again, these graphic tools can be used in both Master Page and Page Graphics mode. Master Page stuff will show up on every (or every other page), so remember to exercise restraint. You can always zip up each page in Page Graphics. Have Fun!

Next month we tackle the actual placement of text in Page Layout mode. Ooh, the suspense! ☒



C= Hacking Mag #14 Hits the E-Streets

The newest edition of Hacking mag was different in that the Emailed version contained no uuencoded files. Instead the included programs were attached to the huge text file. Hacking mag #14 contains: *The Commodore Telnet BBS* by Bo Zimmerman. In this age of internetworked computer systems, is the Commodore left out? No way, as Bo Zimmerman describes how to coax your Commodore BBS system to play the networking game. Bo shows how to set up your BBS so that Internet users can "telnet" to your BBS from anywhere on the 'Net.

Menu Toolbox III by Jeff Jones. You've got this neat idea for a game, utility, or productivity application. The engine is complete and working, but the user interface is a mess. Do you scrap the project because you're not up to the task of writing a whole UI engine? Nonsense. Jeff presents a rich set of functions and subroutines to tame that killer application.

The CMD Nirvana: The Guts and Glory by Todd Elliott. Has your computer system started looking like the multi-headed beast from a "B" movie? Are you tired of having so many items on your desk? Do you envy IBM PC owners with their all-in-one computer? Well, if you answered YES! to any of the above, let Todd show you his souped up C128DCR. Learn how you, too, can "upgrade" your computer system and refine its image.

Jim Butterfield: The Commodore

Guru - An Interview by Jim Lawless. Jim Butterfield has long been associated with the Commodore computer system, from the days of the KIM-1 to the present. Many of us learned machine language through Jim's articles or books, while most have benefited from his early work on creating memory maps and documenting KERNAL routines for the Commodore line. Jim Lawless talks to the ubiquitous Commodore Guru.

Hi Tech Trickery by Alan Jones (Reference: trick) In part II of Alan's "Heavy Math" series, he moves right into Linear Programming and how to accomplish it on the C64. If you're still not sure what LP math is, read on, as you'll be surprised at which everyday problems fall into this category of mathematics.

Hacking BASICS by Richard T. Cunningham (Reference: basic) Even as more and more programmers take up the ML flag and wave it proudly, there are many who either use BASIC entirely, or prototype pieces of code in BASIC before converting to ML. Richard outlines some common "gotchas" in the ever-present programming language.

Twiddling the Bits by Ward Shrake OK, VIC-20 enthusiasts, listen up. Resident VIC-20 cartridge expert Ward Shrake details exactly how the VIC-20 and its cartridges work together to allow the user to play games and use applications on cartridge. Ward details how to archive your collection of VIC carts, as well as how the computer recognizes and executes code on a cartridge.

Plus more departments: The (cough,

cough) Hacking Editor, Input/Output, Newsfront, Hacking the Mags, UseNuggets, FIDO's Nuggets, The Hacking Review, Hack Surfing, Commodore Trivia, ? DS, DSS: rem The Error Channel, The Next Hack, Hacking the Code.

You can grab the entire issue of Hacking #14 on LOADSTAR #150 and LOADSTAR 128 Quarterly #33, 3½-inch only. It is available free of charge on the Internet.

QWKRR128 and QWKie:

Reading Bulletin Board Service (BBS) Mail Offline by Gaelyne R. Gasson. I have a deep love for communicating with others, whether in a print medium such as this newsletter, or in electronic messages on the Internet and Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs). The ability to read and answer electronic messages offline and at my leisure is something I treasure, and when Jeff asked me to explain a little about what QWKRR128 and QWKie are, I jumped at the opportunity. It's a pleasure to introduce others to the world of offline mail reading.

A Little Background: Several years ago, a special format was developed that let BBS callers download the mail from the BBS to read offline. This format is called "QWK" and is pronounced as either "quick" or "Q-W-K." To read the mail in this format, you need a program known as an "offline mail reader," which is especially designed for this type of mail. The QWK format has messages in one file called "messages.dat," and the

(Continued on page 10)

Qlink Continued

(Continued from page 1)

family, Qlink days seem more grand. Though Qlink members were banished from the Internet even while AOL had Internet gateways, and Qlink members were banned from exchanging mail internally with MAC and PC users, we were still catered to.

I mean most any C-64 user anywhere in the US and parts of Canada could stick in a disk, hit a couple of keys, and navigate through the universe of Qlink in much the same way AOL users do today. Everything was done for us. Any problems and we could call an 800 number, and stay on hold for an hour just

like real PC people! Now we must find our own ways online. The only nationwide outlets for us are Genie and DELPHI. Funny, I mentioned Genie at a computer store recently and the salesman replied, "Genie, who?"

Now AOL claims that our C-64s can communicate fast enough to connect, which isn't true. Truth is they could pay a programmer or three a few thousand dollars to write new C-64/128 software, but they'd never make zillions of dollars from us. At the most they'd get hundreds of thousands of dollars from us — not even enough for a single commercial spot on Seinfeld.

Qlink has transformed into AOL and all the Commodore money in the world isn't enough to grab its attention. They have *millions* of customers now instead of 20,000 happy C-64ers. They say you meet the same people going down that you left while going up. When the world goes all-Internet and the AOLs and Prodigies die, will they open up their black sheep book and call us up again?

(Continued from page 9)

BBS mail conferences in another, called "control.dat." The mail reader uses both files to display the mail. In some ways, the QWK format is similar to a database. To use a QWK format offline mail reader, the BBS must offer QWK mail support.

Advantages To Reading Mail

Offline: From the perspective of the BBS operator, callers that participate in the message bases offline are a double blessing. First, the caller is actively taking part in the BBS mail activities. Second, since the user is offline, the BBS is available to serve more users within the same time period.

BBS callers who use offline mail readers benefit in several ways:

- More BBS time for other online activities like Games, Downloading files, etc..
- Your phone line isn't busy. If you get hungry while reading the mail, you can order pizza, and your mother-in-law won't complain that your phone is always busy.
- You can take the time to compose your messages with no worries about running out of time before the BBS kicks you off.
- You have more control over when you read the mail. You can download mail and read it later in the day, then answer it when the kids are in bed.
- You can stop reading and return later to the same place you left off.
- It's easier to correct errors and check facts.
- It's easier to insert a text file in a message offline than it is to send it through your term program's buffer. The results are more predictable, too.
- You can read just your personal mail from all conferences.
- You can save information for future use by printing or saving messages to disk.
- You can include witty or meaningless sayings (taglines) at the bottom of your messages, similar to bumper stickers. Stealing taglines to use in your own messages can be habit forming. Several Fidonet conferences are dedicated to this "addiction". My personal favorite tagline (guaranteed not be stolen) is: "...I liked QWKRR128 so much, I married the programmer!" :-)

The Mail Routine: There's a cyclical routine to getting mail, reading and answering it, then sending the BBS your replies:

- 1 Download the mail from the BBS.
- 2 Exit your terminal program
- 3 Run the program to dissolve the archived mail packet.
- 4 Run the offline mail reader (QWKRR128 or QWKie).
- 5 Run your terminal program and call the BBS.
- 6 Upload the reply packet to the BBS.
- 7 Start again! ;-)

The nice part about offline mail reading is that you can do other things in between these steps. Some people only phone the BBS once a day (or once a week) to send their replies and download

new mail. It's entirely a matter of personal choice.

Things to Know and Have Before Using QWKRR128 or QWKie: QWK mail is compressed, or archived so there's just one "mail packet" to download, and this must be dissolved before you can read the mail. Offline mail readers do not dissolve mail archives (on any platform), and QWKRR and QWKie are no exception. A question often asked about offline mail is why the mail readers don't include programs to deal with archived mail. The answer is they can't - these programs are copyright by others.

Currently, Commodore users can dissolve PKZIP v1.x files, PKPAK (or ARC) and LZH archives. You will need to download the programs to dissolve these, and learn how to use them before you can begin exploring the world of offline mail reading. LOADSTAR 128 readers who use DavesTerm 128 have it pretty easy, as they can dissolve LZH files using DT128's built in utility. Other programs to dissolve archives are listed below.

Files to Download: If you want to explore using QWKie or QWKRR128, here's a list of files that you'll need. These can be found on BBSs that support Commodore users and on the Internet via FTP at

*ccnga.uwaterloo.ca in the /pub/
cbm/telecomm directories.*

QWKie Offline Mail Reader for the C64 by Arthur Moore. Freeware. QWKIEFRE.SFX

QWKRR128 Offline Mail Reader for the C128 by Rod Gasson. Shareware \$20AU.

QWKRR43.TXT Describes Program and lists files to download.

QWKRR43A.SFX Main QWKRR128 v4.3 files Part A.
QWKRR43B.SFX QWKRR128 v4.3 Text Documentation.

QWKRRUT.SFX Utilities for QWKRR128 v4.x
QWRR43T.ZIP Documentation and Tutorial for v4.3 in QWK format.

QWKRR432.PAT Patch to update v4.30 or v4.31 to v4.32

Programs to Dissolve Archives

NZP12817.SFX by David Schmoll.

CSX01.SDA by Chris Smeets.

LZH64-09.SFX by Chris Smeets and Marko Makela

Note: QWKRR128 v5.0 is in the Beta testing stage, but the beta version is for registered users only.

Gaelyne R. Gasson is a freelance writer and the author of "The Internet For Commodore Users." She can be reached at moranec@hal9000.net.au or from her home page at <http://hal9000.net.au/~moranec>.

Moves

Cougar tracks, a very active and informative user group, has moved. **Commodore Users Group Ames Region (COUGAR)**

128A General Services Bldg, ISU
Ames IA 50011-4001

Dave Peterson

Club Correspondent

dapeter@iastate.edu

Long-term Hardware Storage Advice.

by spindrift@sprynet.com (Spindrift)

xy3951@epix.net writes:

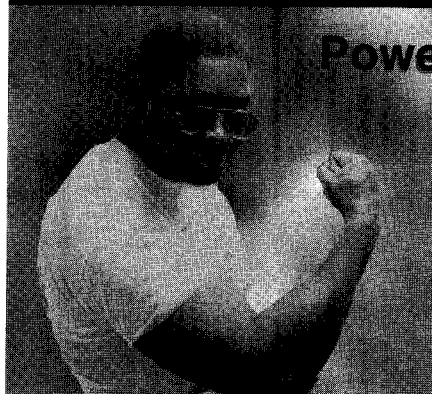
Hi, I have a question regarding storage of Computer equipment. Basically it is all right if I store a 1702 monitor on a second floor of a garage? In the summer it is vented so it will not get too hot (just to about 90 or 98 max on the really hot days), and the winter it is not heated at all. Could damage occur? I know that if it gets too hot it could reduce the life, but how about cold? I have heard different things, and personally I think that no harm would occur. But I would like to hear your options.

cruiser1466@delphi.com wrote: Rather than concerns about heat and cold, I'd be more concerned about moisture. I think internal corrosion is a bigger problem, since the "temp range" you're quoting should not be a problem for an unplugged monitor.

>John

I'll agree with John... Moisture is a killer (experience speaking). It may be a good idea to put it in a plastic bag, drop a couple packs of Silica Gel in to absorb moisture, seal the thing really good, then box it if possible. I've done this with a number of electronic items I've had to put in storage and it's worked out well. I guess it also a question of how long you plan to store the thing.

Cougar Tracks



Power Programming: Basic To ML Part II

Processing A Data File In ML From a BASIC Outline

```
ARE GONE!"
120 END
200 GET#1,B$
210 IF ASC(B$)=13 THEN
PRINT#2,A$::PRINT#2,A$::GOTO 60
220 PRINT#2,B$::GOTO 60
```

Oh yes, the program also prints periods across the screen as it works, to let the user know something is happening! Slows the program down, of course, to do that.

Isn't the Internet grand? Emil's version would work fine, but I neglected to elucidate on the algorithm I intended for this article. Manually compiled, Emil's program would run hundreds of times faster. Got JiffyDOS equipment, maybe a SuperCPU? Try thousands of times faster.

This kind of task doesn't compile well with normal compilers. The speed increase is barely noticeable. But try entering this (minus any bugs I probably overlooked) and this will fly. I will begin translating my version here, commenting where I can and wrapping up afterwards.

```
line10 ldx <inputname
ldy >inputname
lda #8; name length
jsr setnam; that's $ffbd
lda #2; logical file number
ldx #8; device number
ldy #2; secondary address
jsr setlfs ;that's $ffba
jsr open ;that's $ffc0
line20 ldx <outputname
ldy >outputname
lda #12; name length
jsr setnam
lda #1
ldx #8
ldy #1
jsr setlfs
jsr open
line30 lda #0
sta jstring
line40 jsr clrchn ;$ffcc
ldx #2
jsr chkin; set channel for input
jsr getin ; $ffe4
sta astring
line50 jsr readst ; $ffb7
sta xvar; preserve status variable
line60 lda astring
cmp #13
beq line80
line70 lda jstring
cmp #13
beq line80
lda " "
sta astring
line80 jsr clrchn
ldx #1
jsr chkout
lda astring
```

```
jsr chROUT
line90 lda astring
sta jstring
line100 lda x
beq line40
line110 lda #2
jsr close ;$ffc3
lda #1
jsr close
jsr clrchn
rts
```

```
inputname .asc "text,s,r"
outputname .asc "stripped,s,w"
jstring .byt 0
astring
x .byt 0
```

This program is finished — and it's hundreds of times faster. One line, Line30, was unnecessary for the ML version, but it would be necessary if the program were run again. Can you decipher why? Can you use get's string and get's number, covered in an earlier column, to transform this code so that you can call it in the following fashion?

sys address,infile\$,dv,outfile,d2

There are two themes to remember when dealing with input and output files:

Whether in BASIC or ML, always get and store ST after reading. You must store it because ST will be 0 again when you write to the output file.

When dealing with files, get used to checking in and checking out with the Kernal routines, CHKIN, \$FFC6, and CHKOUT, \$FFC9. These routines tell your C-64 which file you're talking to or listening to. Before calling CHKIN or CHKOUT, you must call CLRCHN (clear channels), \$FFCC. Before you print to the screen again and especially before you return to BASIC, you must perform a final CLRCHN to make everything normal. BASIC does this for you when a BASIC program ends and when you close files. In ML you must do this yourself. Closing all files goes without saying.

Next month I'll show you how to write relocatable ML, and later, how to tack relocatable code to the end of your BASIC program. ☐

There are eight million ways to strip single carriage returns from a text file in the naked city. This is one of them:

```
10 open2,8,2,"text,s,r"
20 open1,8,1,"stripped,s,w"
30 j$=""
40 get#2,a$
50 x = status
60 if a$<>chr$(13)then80
70 if j$<>chr$(13)thena$="[space]"
80 print#1,a$;
90 j$=a$
100 ifx=0then 40
110 close2:close1
```

This program leaves paragraphs intact, but turns all other carriage returns into spaces. It'll make LOADSTAR disk-type articles ready to be turned into TWS files. I wrote this in two minutes, and there are 7,999,999 better ways to do this in BASIC. Here's proof. Right when I was about to translate this code into ML, Emil Volcheck, Emailed his version of the solution:

Jeff - per your note on p.11 of LOADSTAR Letter #38, I list below a short utility to remove extra carriage returns from a file. The program assumes that the file is a PetASCII or ASCII, sequential file and assigns a default file name, returns.gone to the output file (though obviously, one can easily change it to allow the user to input some other file name). It preserves paragraph breaks where a line with only a CR is used to separate the paragraphs and it assures that the last character in the file is a CR.

```
20 INPUT " FILENAME
";NA$:H$="RETURNS.GONE
30 INPUT " DEVICE # "8";DV
40 OPEN 1,DV,8,"0:"+NA$+",S,R"
:REM OPEN FILE TO READ
50 OPEN 2,DV,9,"0:"+H$+",S,W"
:REM OPEN FILE TO WRITE
60 GET#1,A$:S=ST:IF S THEN 100
70 IF ASC(A$)=13 THEN 200
80 PRINT#2,A$::PRINT ".";
90 GOTO 60
100 PRINT#2:CLOSE 2:CLOSE 1
110 PRINT:PRINT " EXTRA RETURNS
```

Meeting 64/128 Users cont...

(Continued from page 2)

would pay \$8.00.

The application that accompanies this letter MUST be completed and returned with your dues. Make all checks and money orders payable to: Joseph Y. Powell, NOT to the group. Mail your check/money order along with your completed application to: Meeting 64/128 Users Through the Mail, Tom Adams, 4427 39th Street, Brentwood, MD 20722-1022.

In writing the one paragraph "bio" of a member, we depend on the information on the application. Please indicate the model of your Commodore computer(s) as well as other types of equipment such as disk drives, printers, modems, monitors, RAMLinks, etc. It is not necessary to list minor accessories such as joysticks and the like. Computers other than a Commodore 64/128 will be listed as "other." Also include anything you would like the other members to know about you. If possible please avoid abbreviations and spell out words and print or type the information instead of handwriting it. This "bio" can be updated at any time but will be published only in March and September.

There's no room for the form in this newsletter, but include all of the following information:

Name, Address (Street or Route#), City, State/Zip, Telephone number and/or FAX (optional) Sex, Occupation, Hobbies or Interests in addition to computing. Computers owned (Please designate model i.e.: 64 or 128, Drives, Printers Monitors, Other Non Commodore equipment, Special computer interests. This may be updated at any time but will not be changed until the next published membership list

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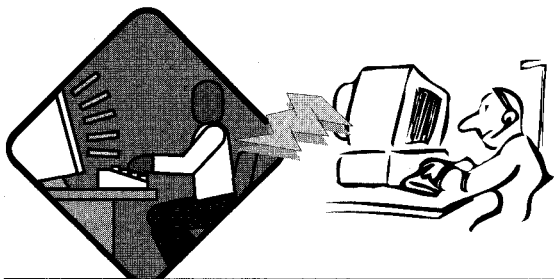
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